

Lavant Horticultural Society

June Meeting 2017 – ‘Roses with a Twist’

Notes from talk given by Roger Hirons

It is well known that roses should not be planted in places where a rose has just been taken out (depletion of specific micro-nutrients, build-up of diseases). However, Roger stressed that this warning is relevant not only to roses as such, but the whole ‘rose’ family - the Rosacea.

A good example is a hawthorn (*member of Rosacea family*) hedge. In order to close a gap in the hedge, you plant a hawthorn slip. To start with, this develops well in the good new soil you put in the planting hole. However, after some time when its roots expand to meet the existing hedge root system, its growth is checked and it will eventually die. Much better to close the gap with a plant that does not belong to the Rosacea family, such a holly, whose development will not be hindered by the existing hawthorn root system.

Roger highlighted several members of the Rosaceae family, demonstrating them with potted examples and with large pictures that gave a good impression of the plant and its name.

Amelanchier alnifolia Saskatoon

Pyracantha Saphyr - available with red, orange or yellow berries.

Cotoneaster:

- ❖ Cotoneaster microphylla – replacement for low box hedging.
- ❖ Cotoneaster congestus and Cotoneaster congestus nana

Sanguisorba – very versatile and underused plants:

- ❖ Sanguisorba obtusa - nodding pink flower heads. Also available in a white form, Sanguisorba obtusa Alba.
- ❖ Sanguisorba tenuifolia

Although the talk did not focus specifically on **roses**, Roger did recommend two rose varieties and showed a sample of each that he had brought with him:

- ❖ **‘Madame Alfred Carrière’** – an old climbing rose [*introduced in 1879*], repeat flowering with a really superb fragrance. Roger showed a potted sample demonstrating its good disease resistance. Will do well even on a north facing wall.
- ❖ **Rosa rugosa** – a vigorous repeat flowering species rose, completely impervious to all diseases. Will do well almost everywhere.
Fragrant deep pink flowers [*there are some white flowered selections*].

When planting, dig a hole significantly larger than the pot/root ball. Around the sides, mix some of the original soil, no matter how poor it is – even builders’ rubble, in with the planting medium. This encourages the roots to grow out beyond the planting hole, rather than being trapped within it.

The above are just personal notes that, unfortunately do not cover all the useful information Roger gave. Hopefully, they will serve to jog the memory.

Any comments or corrections to webmaster@lavanthortsoc.org.uk